

Country Statement of China

I. Strategic Objectives for China's National Statistical System

National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS) has set for itself a number of goals. These include: improve the accuracy, timeliness and scientific soundness of statistical data and to enhance the authoritativeness of official statistics in order to provide efficient and quality statistical service to the governments, the public and the international community. These goals are to be achieved through following measures:

- To establish a national accounts system
- To make full use of modern IT facilities
- To revise statistical legislation and improve supervision, and
- To build and improve the statistical services to better serve data users

NBS recognizes that human resource development through an effective system of statistical education and training are a key to increasing the quantity and quality of professionals engaged in data gathering, statistical design, analysis, and management. It further acknowledges that the existing statistical legislation needs strengthening and the legal powers of NBS need to be reinforced. Management systems in place are weak; the relationship between NBS and statistical agencies at other levels of the government and other ministries are difficult and inadequately coordinated. Data quality remains an issue partly because of resource constraints.

II. Issues Concerning Human Resource Management

At present, NBS has no systematic approaches or indicators that measure the contributions of staff in the goal achievement of the organization. Probably something close to it is the annual performance evaluation. Performance evaluation of staff at NBS has involved self-evaluation by staff, receiving anecdotal input from colleagues, superiors and subordinates, and performance rating by direct supervisors. NBS recognized that this process and the information collected were inadequate as an input to the human resource management. It sought to develop more reliable, transparent and quantitative process. In recent years, NBS has implemented a 360-degree feedback questionnaire that would quantify this type of input and would involve the use of standardized criteria. The new approach has been used since 2003 on a trial basis. It is planned to use the 360-degree questionnaire as a reference tool to complement other sources of information to achieve the following 3 purposes:

- Supervisors will use the information from the 360-degree questionnaire when

providing --Feedback to employees to complement the information from other sources,
the information gained from the questionnaire will be used indirectly as input to the promotion process,

--The information will be used for training purposes to identify weaknesses and to determine appropriate training required.

III. Statistical Staff Size and Their Education Background

The growth of the economy, the extensions in the statistical coverage of sectors of economic activity previously omitted, and the introduction of new statistical methods have led to a rapid increase in the size of the statistical system. The governmental statistical system, over which NBS has certain influences through budget allocation and professional guidance, employs some 72,000 employees. Of these less than 20 percent were employed directly by NBS. Another 10 percent were engaged at the provincial level, with the rest distributed between prefectures/cities and counties. In terms of educational attainment, just over 30 percent had degree level education. The rest were staff who had completed either technical or secondary schooling with limited exposure to statistics. Following table presents the staff size and their education.

Staff Size and Their Education Background

	Total Staff Employed (person)	Degree		
		Above Bachelor	Diploma for Professional Training	Below Diploma for Technical Training
Total	72400	32.4	46.0	21.6
NBS Headquarter	1000	75.1	19.6	5.3
Survey Teams of NBS	11900	27.3	43.3	29.4
Statistical Organization of Local Government	59500	32.6	47.0	20.4
Of which: Province	6900	60.8	28.4	10.8
Prefecture and City	12900	40.5	45.9	13.6
County	39700	25.1	50.7	24.2

IV. Statistical Education and Training Institutes in China

NBS has attempted to give due prominence to statistical education and training. Large investments have been made in the Statistical Education Centre (SEC) within NBS.

The major functions of SEC include: organization of national statistical education and training plans and regulations; managing the training institute of the bureau, oversight and coordination over colleges and universities across the country where statistics are taught, training of statisticians, and managing the preparation and publishing of national statistics textbooks.

In addition to the SEC, training activities are pursued by the Provincial Statistical Bureaus through education and training institutions at the provincial level. The Prefecture level statistical offices have set up education units or training stations.

The SEC offers diploma level via distance learning programs using TV and radio, correspondence and face-to-face instruction.

On-the-job training is designed and provided for both NBS and statisticians of local offices. The on the job training offered is subject matter oriented and is directed to senior and mid-level staff.

There is no denying that NBS has placed considerable emphasis on promoting statistical education and training with the objective of upgrading the knowledge and skills of statistical personnel. Given the size of the country and the large numbers of personnel employed, the impact has been modest. The SEC has attempted to use distance learning programs to pursue its goals of reaching the greatest possible number in a low cost manner by taking some innovative measures.

Illustrative of the approach was the attempt to improve knowledge of sample surveys. Under the CIDA financed technical cooperation program between Statistics Canada and NBS an effort was made to develop tools to train NBS employees in survey-taking skills, in order to upgrade the practical skills of the statistical workers in the Chinese statistical system. A training manual containing the basic concepts and practical skills involved in the design and implementation of household sample surveys together with a training video were produced. These were considered essential tools to permit the Survey Skills course to be offered to a large number of people throughout the Chinese statistical system. The training material (manual and video) was very well received by the NBS. Over 20,000 trainees beneficiaries of the courses offered.

The Statistical Education Center has also organized management oriented courses for managers at both the headquarters and in the provinces. The courses have been at several levels: a) general exposure to best statistical practice, e.g. survey skills, b) targeted training linked with particular pilot activities e.g. household surveys c) linked to introduction of new management systems e.g. human resource and financial management.

The majority of statisticians trained in recent years are still working in statistical agencies (NBS or local statistical offices). This is mainly because under the current employment situation, government employees are generally regarded as having a stable, decent and well-paid job. On the other hand, the possibility of moving to other government agencies is also small.

Annexes:

Training Courses Offered by Chinese Statistical Training Institutes in Recent Years

1) NBS Staff Trained 2002-2007 by Type of Courses

Courses	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Subject-oriented Courses(1) (1-2Weeks)	390	397	320	248	126	79	1560
Internet-based Courses (varying duration)				305	328		633
English Language Courses (3 months)				116	130	16	246
Courses Leading to Master Degree (2-year)	25	40	25	14	8	7	119
Courses Leading to Ph.D Degree (2-year)	4	2	1	8	5	6	26
Invited Lectures	900	200	500	60	400	1200	3260

Note:

(1): Example of subject-oriented courses included WTO and China: Its Statistical Implication, Sampling Techniques, Survey Skill, Time Series Analysis, Contemporary Economics, Probability and Mathematical Statistics, English Listening and Writing, National Account System of China (2002), etc.

2) Statistical Staff Trained at Local Levels 2002-2007 by Type of Courses

Courses	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Management Courses for Director-Generals of Provincial Statistical Bureaus (1 week)	20	22	18	24	20	34	138
Management Courses for Directors of Prefecture/City Statistical Bureaus (1 week)	80			45			125
Management Courses for Directors of County Statistical Bureaus (1 week)		39	30	279	150	816	1314
Management Courses for Director-Generals of NBS Survey Teams at Provincial Level (1 week)			41		29	31	101
Survey Skill (3 weeks)	11300	8244	2400				21944
Probability (4 weeks)		3700	59				3759
National Accounts (3 weeks)				5157	4558		9715
Statistical Classification (2 weeks)					7692		7692
Courses Leading to Master Degree (2-year)	19	22	16	21	22		100
Courses Leading to Ph.D Degree (2-year)				16	18	16	50

3) Training Courses Conducted by Overseas Lectures

Courses	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Courses conducted overseas (2-3 weeks)	111	122	143	189	154	223	942
Courses conducted in China by lectures from overseas (1-4 weeks)	320	450	312	281	70	214	1647